St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School

CATHOLIC LIFE POLICY

"True education is directed towards the formation of the human person in the view of his final end and the good of that society to which he belongs and in the duties of which he will, as an adult, have a share." Vatican II (Gravissimum Educationis, 1)

St. John Bosco Catholic Primary School, through its Mission Statement, Aims and Policies, seeks to realise the ideals of "true education", firmly rooted in the Christian tradition. In partnership with home and community, we strive to nurture the religious instinct with which we believe all human beings are endowed, thereby helping each young person to reach his or her full human potential.

Our staffing policy is consistent with these aims and acknowledges that everyone contributes in some way to the religious character of the school. Our aims fully respect the faith of Christians of other denominations, whose contribution to our school is highly valued. They also respect members of other world faiths, affirming that "the Catholic Church rejects nothing of what is true and holy in these religions." (Vatican II, Nostra Aetate 3). Our aims have much in common with all people of goodwill who seek truth and justice.

The Spiritual Life of the School

"Christ is at the centre of our school and as followers of Christ we want to become closer in our journey through life."

As a Catholic Primary School, we aim to develop and nurture the children as they start their journey in their faith. As a governing body we believe that "Christ at the Centre" develops and enhance the spiritual life of the school.

We as a school aim to:

- Provide children with the skills to reflect upon their faith
- Celebrate are uniqueness as followers of Christ
- Provide an environment in which children can learn how to pray and learn how to reflect

- Provide an environment in which Christ is at the centre of the school and through all aspects of the school life where the spiritual, cultural and personal worlds which grow our children's values, motivation, aspirations and the moral imperatives that inform our choices and actions as persons
- Assist parents with developing children's faith journeys
- Develop and nurture children`s awe and wonder about life of Christ

The Celebration of Mass

The celebration of the Eucharist is at the centre of the spiritual life of the School. We aim to provide a variety of opportunities and experiences attuned to the different stages of development of our faith.

Masses are carefully planned in advance by class teachers, so that all children have the opportunity to lead and celebrate. Mass is celebrated weekly, and all staff and children attend from Y1-Y6 (Reception children attend mass weekly in the summer term).

Members of other denominations are welcomed at Mass and contribute as far as their individual consciences and the norms of the Catholic Church allow. Those who wish to receive a blessing at the Eucharist are invited to come forward.

Reconciliation through the Sacrament of Reconciliation

We aim to nurture a growing appreciation of the joy of forgiving and being forgiven, the gradual formation of conscience and the infinite mercy of God.

Our children should encounter and seek to live in accordance with the ideals of this Sacrament and the quality of relationships within the School should bear witness to this.

Our children are given the opportunity of receiving the Sacrament in school during Advent and Lent. Special arrangements are made during Lent with the assistance of visiting Clergy.

We strive to provide children with quality preparation and meaningful celebration of the Sacrament, fostering a relationship of trust, enabling them to discuss difficult areas of their lives in complete confidence and encounter Christ's redemptive love.

Other Celebrations/Liturgies

The Church's Liturgical Year and Traditional Devotions

By using the ancient tradition of the Liturgical year as a framework, we draw on the wealth of the whole church to teach our children who God is and what they are. We

follow the development through the Curriculum Directory, introducing children to the lives of saints, to the changes of season and the mood and colour expressing these changes. Children are given the associated language, sings and symbols. This involves progression, some repetition and deepening of understanding.

We also celebrate our faith through the following:

- Monday Gospel Assembly
- Weekly Liturgy assemblies
- Profession of our Faith in September
- On Ash Wednesday all pupils are able to attend Mass or a Liturgy of the Word in which ashes are distributed and the season of Lent is explained.
- Rosary during October, Stations of the Cross during Lent.
- An annual Advent Service for pupils, parents, Governors and staff is held towards the end of the Autumn Term at Holy Cross Catholic Church.
- May Procession to celebrate Mary
- End of year prayer service and reflection

Sacramental Preparation

At St John Bosco Catholic Primary School, children in Year 3 are prepared for and received the Sacrament of Reconciliation and the Sacrament of Holy Communion and children in Year 5 and 6 the Sacrament of Confirmation. These are very special and important times for the children and we endeavour to make this as memorable as we can.

We enjoy close links with our Parish Churches and there is a Parish Confirmation/Communion Programme provided by Catechists for children in Year 5 & 6 and Year 3. All children are asked to attend these classes plus make a commitment to attending Mass on a regular basis to ensure they are ready to receive their Sacraments.

Prayer Life

We, at St John Bosco Catholic School, aim to create and maintain an environment where this is fostered and developed.

Our classrooms, work areas and school entrance are welcoming, bright, colourful and creative so that our Mission Statement is being lived out through our surroundings.

We aim to promote the culture of prayer by reflecting on the promise of Christ: **"Ask and you shall receive, seek and you shall find, knock and the door will be open to you."**

Children are encouraged and helped to discover the many different ways in which to pray, formal and informal, private and communal. They are encouraged to be still and listen to God.

We aim to teach and develop a variety of prayer methods to the children such as:

• Teaching the traditional prayers of the church alongside new prayers.

• Allowing the children to develop their spiritual awareness by giving them the skills to create asking, thanksgiving, praising and sorry prayers. (Spontaneous prayer)

• Through the reading of the Gospels and the Holy Bible. (Liturgical prayer)

• Through the teaching of traditional hymns alongside new style hymns.

• Through the teaching of drama, sacred music and prayer.

• Meditating and reflecting in silence whilst being inspired by liturgical music and religious art.

Prayer in the classroom

Each classroom in the school creates a prayerful environment by each having a prayer focus.

• It is required that this focus is dressed in the liturgical colours of the year as a visual sign to the children to show the change and the mood of the liturgical calendar.

• This prayer focus should have a bible which shows the previous Sunday's Gospel readings; or the reading associated with a feast day; or a reading which is relevant to that scheme of work.

• Teachers are encouraged to be creative when creating an interactive display on this focus. Objects, images, candles which reflect the liturgical year and feasts.

• Teachers are encouraged to provide a prayer box where children can write petitions so that the class as a community can pray for the need of the class.

• Each room in the school has a crucifix which reminds us all of the sacrifice of Christ for all of humanity; it reminds us that Christ is the foundation stone of Catholic education and that Christ is at the centre at everything we do.

It is required by law to provide daily worship in the classroom. Teacher and pupils pray at each of these periods of the day:

- At the beginning of the school day (asking prayer)

- Before and after Lunchtime (Thanksgiving prayer)
- At Home time (asking, thanksgiving and or praising prayer)

Garden of Prayer

The Prayer Garden offer pupils a quiet place to contemplate and reflect.

Giving to Others

We aim to bring about an awareness of the needs of others. This is an on-going process and those less fortunate than us are remembered in daily prayer. During the autumn season children and the community are encouraged to bring in food for those less fortunate during the Harvest Festival celebrations. During the seasons of Lent and Advent we raise funds for various charities at home and overseas, e.g. raffles, non-uniform days, cake sales, weighing of coins, sponsored walks, etc which are often planned and organised by the school council or liturgical leaders.

Children are always encouraged to help each other as well as their parents, teachers and other people in our community.

It is our aim that our whole school ethos is one that will foster and nurture a generous giving of self, an appreciation and respect for one's own property and that of others.

Parental Involvement

We believe that if our Religious Programme is to be effective, we must at each stage seek to involve parents and give them the confidence to play their part in the formation of their children.

The school supports and develops the primary task of parents as the first teachers of their children in the ways of Faith. We aim to involve parents by:-

1. Inviting them to Friday assemblies

2. Inviting them to celebrate Holy Mass and Reconciliation services at different times during the school year

3. They are invited to parent meetings when Religious Education is discussed e.g. as their children enter school in Reception, at Curriculum Open Evenings and later as they begin their immediate preparation for the Sacraments.

4. Inviting them to special celebrations e.g. Christmas Nativity Play, Christmas Carol Service, Easter Assemblies, Leavers Mass, Easter and Christmas celebrations.

5. They are encouraged to bring their children to the Holy Mass either Saturday evening or Sunday.

6. They are encouraged to support the Religious Education lessons by helping their children complete homework tasks and discuss with their children work being completed when preparing to receive the Sacraments.

7. Providing information evenings on the Sacramental Programme and Family life education.

8. Inviting them to share their views through curriculum evenings, pupil progress meetings, Sacrament meetings, family life education meetings and through questionnaires.

This policy was reviewed in May 2026.